

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide that
 - (a) comprises a first amino acid sequence of at least 70 contiguous amino acids in length that is identical to a region of a wild type HBV core protein; ~~and~~
 - (b) lacks a second amino acid sequence of the wild type HBV core protein, wherein the second sequence comprises the carboxyterminal three amino acids of the wild type HBV core protein and does not exceed nine amino acids in length; and
 - (c) reduces hepadnavirus replication,

wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a promoter selected from the group consisting of hepatocyte-specific, cytomegalovirus, herpes simplex virus, hepatitis virus, Rous sarcoma virus and Simian Virus 40 promoters.
2. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the first amino acid sequence is selected from the group consisting of each of the amino acids between position 174 and position 180 of SEQ ID NO: 12, inclusive.
3. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide that
 - (a) comprises a first amino acid sequence of at least 70 contiguous amino acids in length that is identical to a region of a wild type hepadnavirus core protein;
 - (b) lacks a second amino acid sequence of the wild type hepadnavirus core protein, wherein the second sequence comprises the carboxyterminal three amino acids of the wild type hepadnavirus core protein; ~~and~~

(c) comprises a third amino acid sequence that is identical to a portion of a wild type hepadnavirus surface protein; and

(d) reduces hepadnavirus replication,

wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a promoter selected from the group consisting of hepatocyte-specific, cytomegalovirus, herpes simplex virus, hepatitis virus, Rous sarcoma virus and Simian Virus 40 promoters.

4. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 3, wherein the second amino acid sequence does not exceed 100 amino acids in length.

5. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 3, wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the first amino acid sequence corresponds to a position selected from the group consisting of each of amino acids 71 to 180 of SEQ ID NO: 12, inclusive.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1.

8. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 2.

9. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 3.

10. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 4.

11. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 5.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Original) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1.
14. (Original) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 2.
15. (Original) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 3.
16. (Original) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 4.
17. (Original) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 5.
18. (Canceled)
19. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a hepatocyte-specific promoter selected from the group consisting of: albumin, alpha-fetoprotein, alpha-1-antitrypsin, retinol-binding protein, and asialoglycoprotein receptor promoters.
20. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 2, wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the first amino acid sequence corresponds to position 175 or 178 of SEQ ID NO: 12.
21. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 3, wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a hepatocyte-specific promoter selected from the group consisting of: albumin, alpha-fetoprotein, alpha-1-antitrypsin, retinol-binding protein, and asialoglycoprotein receptor promoters.
22. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 5, wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the first amino acid sequence corresponds to position 171, 175 or 178 of SEQ ID NO: 12.
23. (New) A nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide that

(a) comprises an amino acid sequence identical to amino acids 1 to 171, 1 to 172, or 1 to 173 of SEQ ID NO:12; and

(b) reduces hepadnavirus replication,

wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a promoter selected from the group consisting of hepatocyte-specific, cytomegalovirus, herpes simplex virus, hepatitis virus, Rous sarcoma virus and Simian Virus 40 promoters.

24. (New) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 23.

25. (New) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 23.

26. (New) A nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide consisting of an amino acid sequence identical to a fragment of SEQ ID NO:12, wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the polypeptide corresponds to any of the amino acids between positions 71 to 134, 136 to 143, 145 to 170 and 172 to 180 of SEQ ID NO:12, inclusive, and wherein the polypeptide reduces hepadnavirus replication.

27. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 26, wherein the polypeptide consists of an amino acid sequence identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1 to 172, 1 to 173, 1 to 174, 1 to 175, 1 to 176, 1 to 177, 1 to 178, 1 to 179, and 1 to 180 of SEQ ID NO:12.

28. (New) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 26.

29. (New) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 26.

30. (New) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 27.

31. (New) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 27.

32. (New) A nucleic acid encoding a fusion protein consisting of:

(a) a first amino acid sequence identical to a fragment of SEQ ID NO:12, wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the first amino acid sequence corresponds to any of the amino acids between positions 71 to 176 or between positions 178 to 180 of SEQ ID NO:12, inclusive; and

(b) a second amino acid sequence that is identical to a portion of a wild type hepadnavirus surface protein, wherein the fusion protein reduces hepadnavirus replication.

33. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 32, wherein the first amino acid sequence is identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1 to 171, 1 to 172, 1 to 173, 1 to 174, 1 to 175, 1 to 176, 1 to 178, 1 to 179 and 1 to 180 of SEQ ID NO:12.

34. (New) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 32.

35. (New) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 32.

36. (New) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 33.

37. (New) A cultured host cell comprising the nucleic acid of claim 33.